



Indiana Crop & Weather Report

INDIANA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS
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CROP REPORT FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 23

Crop conditions declined for the first time since mid-July, according to the Indiana Agricultural Statistics Service. Although both crops are still in good condition, corn is beginning to show the results of spring nitrogen leeching and soybeans are suffering from increasing reports of Sudden Death Syndrome. Dry soil conditions are also stressing crops in many areas. Progress remains ahead of average for both crops.

CORN

Corn condition is rated 66 percent good to excellent, compared to 70 percent last week, and 54 percent last year. Eighty-three percent of the corn is in the **dough** stage, ahead of 77 percent last year and the 74 percent average. By region, 86 percent is in the dough stage in the north, 89 percent in the central, and 65 percent in the south. Thirty-five percent of the crop is in the **dent** stage, ahead of the 19 percent average. By region, 35 percent is dented in the north, 39 percent in the central, and 26 percent in the south.

SOYBEANS

Soybean condition is rated 70 percent good to excellent, compared to 74 percent last week, and 60 percent last year. Eighty-seven percent of the soybean crop is **setting pods**, ahead of the 83 percent average. By region, 92 percent of the crop is setting pods in the north, 90 percent in the central, and 70 percent in the south. Five percent of the crop is **shedding leaves**, primarily in the northern two-thirds of the state.

OTHER CROPS

Pasture condition is rated 13 percent excellent, 49 percent good, 31 percent fair, 6 percent poor and 1 percent very poor. **Third cutting of alfalfa** is 66 percent complete.

DAYS SUITABLE and SOIL MOISTURE

For the week ending Friday, 6.8 days were rated **suitable for fieldwork**. **Topsoil moisture** was rated 1 percent very short, 23 percent short, 73 percent adequate and 3 percent surplus. **Subsoil moisture** was rated 1 percent very short, 13 percent short, 83 percent adequate and 3 percent surplus.

CROP PROGRESS

Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5-Year Avg
Percent				
Corn Dough	83	63	77	74
Corn Dent	35	13	12	19
Soybeans Podding	87	74	90	83
Soybeans Shedding	5	NA	0	0

CROP CONDITION

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Percent					
Corn	2	7	25	51	15
Soybeans	2	6	22	50	20
Pasture	1	6	31	49	13

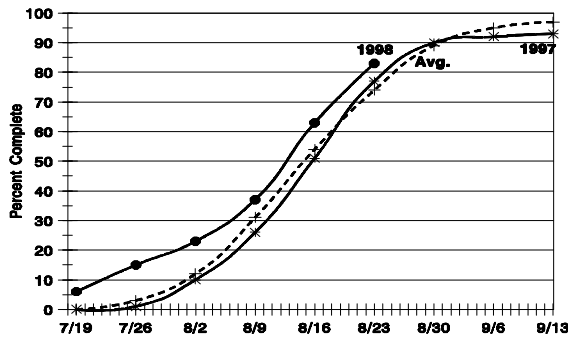
SOIL MOISTURE

	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Percent			
Topsoil			
Very Short	1	0	0
Short	23	4	10
Adequate	73	79	79
Surplus	3	17	11
Subsoil			
Very Short	1	0	4
Short	13	5	22
Adequate	83	79	65
Surplus	3	16	9

--Ralph W. Gann, State Statistician
--Lance Honig, Agricultural Statistician
E-Mail Address: nass-in@nass.usda.gov
<http://info.aes.purdue.edu/agstat/nass.html>

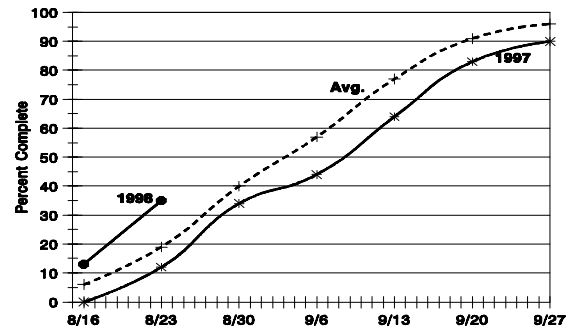
Crop Progress

% Corn In Dough - Indiana



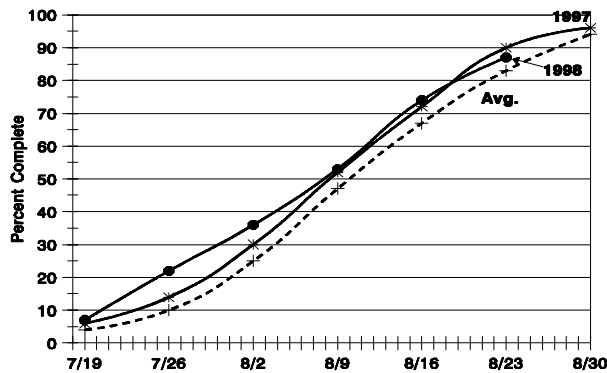
Source: Indiana Agricultural Statistics Service

% Corn Dented - Indiana



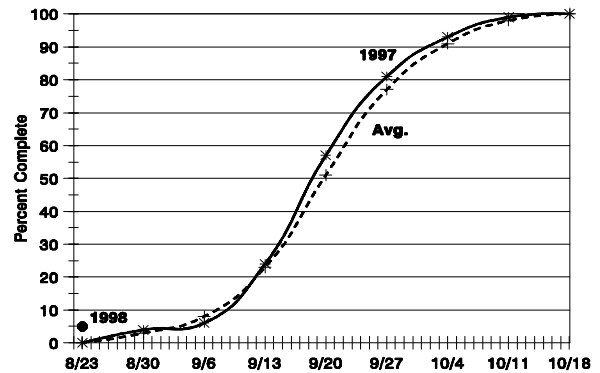
Source: Indiana Agricultural Statistics Service

% Soybeans Podding - Indiana



Source: Indiana Agricultural Statistics Service

% Soybeans Shedding Leaves - Indiana



Source: Indiana Agricultural Statistics Service

What A Mess! (aka Multiple Ears on Single Ear Shank)

The annual Dog Days of August always bring out the odd stories down at the Chat 'n Chew Café. The latest one originated with Marty who claimed he was in a corn field the other day checking out the condition of the developing ears (for which he receives a gold star considering how hot and muggy it's been lately!). Seems that he was finding multiple-eared plants along the edges of the field.

Now, multiple-eared plants in and of themselves are not an oddity. Low plant-to-plant competition (edges of fields, thin populations, etc.) often results in successful ear development at more than one stalk node (joint). This characteristic is often termed "prolificacy" and some prolific hybrids exist that routinely produce more than one harvestable ear at respectable plant populations.

However, Marty claims that the multiple ears were occurring on a single ear shank, rather than their usual occurrence at individual stalk nodes (joints).

The primary ear was at its usual position at the end of the ear shank, but one or more additional ears were developing farther down the same shank.

Well, Marty is not alone in discovering this phenomenon. At Purdue's SEPAC Field Day on August 18 (if you missed it, shame on you!), several folks acknowledged that they had seen similar plants along edges of fields this year. A few of the plants in my own research plots at SEPAC display this strange multiple-eared appearance.

This multiple-eared oddity, let's call it the MESS Syndrome (Multiple Ears on a Single Shank), does not occur very frequently but raises questions when it does show up. Is it a fertility imbalance? Was it caused by your #@\$%! herbicide? Was the seed genetically-challenged? Will it affect grain yield?

(Continued on Page 4.)

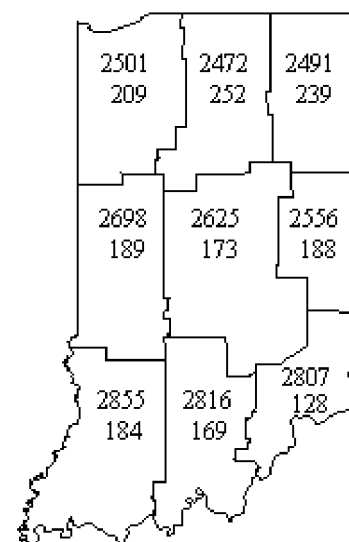
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DN = departure from normal.
 Growing Degree Days = daily mean - 50 (below 50 adjusted to 50, above 86 adjusted to 86.)

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Growing Degree Days
and Departure since April 1



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Estimates (continued)

Well, first of all, let's remember a few things about an ear shank. Basically, an ear shank is a modified stalk. The husk leaves originate from individual nodes (joints) on the shank, similar to the plant's regular leaves originating from individual nodes on the main stalk. Instead of a male flower (tassel) developing at the end of this modified stalk, a female flower (ear shoot) develops.

Similar to the nodes of the main stalk, it is physiologically possible for ear shoots to develop at any of the nodes of the ear shank. Typically, none actually occur. Once in a great while, some do form.

I suspect that the appearance of the MESS Syndrome simply tells us that the plants had ample energy and resources during the initiation and development of the ear shoots earlier in the season, enough that there was extra resources available for the plant to "invest" in the development of these additional ear shoots. Many of these "affected" plants also exhibit the more typical second ear

development at the node below the primary ear that is associated with low plant-to-plant competition. As such, therefore, there is likely nothing negative about the existence of the MESS Syndrome.

Bottom Line: If you haven't seen this phenomenon before, take some time this week to walk your fields and look for it along the edges. You will probably find some. They make good desk ornaments and also make for good conversation at your next social event.

Don't forget, this and other timely information about corn can be view at the Chat 'n Chew Cafe on the W o r l d W i d e W e b a t <http://www.agry.purdue.edu/agronomy/ext/corn/catchew.htm>. For information about corn, take a look at the Corn Growers Guidebook on the W o r l d W i d e W e b a t <http://www.agry.purdue.edu/agronomy/ext/corn/>

--Bob Nielsen, Corn Specialist, Purdue University

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